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## THE SOVIET THREAT (U)

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Robert M. Gates

CIA

Standing before this group to talk about the Soviet strategic threat is a little like being invited to a convention of Evangelicals to talk about why they should believe in Jesus. It is a subject on which all of you have heard countless briefings and are as a group well informed in terms of Soviet weapon systems, their capabilities and effectiveness. There is a danger, however, especially among the well informed, of becoming lost in the trees, of losing perspective on the nature of the strategic competition.

Discussion in the United States of the Soviet threat for too many years has focused on a very narrow aspect of the competition. That discussion has tended to revolve around the presentation of the defense budget and often has concentrated on what they spend and what they get for their money and what we should spend and hope to get for our money. But I would submit that this limits our national attention too much to a debate about numbers and too little to why we are engaged in this competition in the first place, the nature of that competition, and its historical context. We have trivialized the most profound contest in history into metaphysical debates about kill probabilities, throwweight, fractionation, fratricide and survivable C<sup>3</sup>. Now, I know that the numbers are important -- especially at budget time and especially for those who must propose and those who must vote on real programs. Indeed, I will talk to you today about numbers. But the numbers have crowded out history and meaning, and our citizens have little basis to judge whether the cost and risk of the competition are justified because they too often do not understand the nature of the contest itself. So, today, I turn to the past as a guide to the future. I want to place the Soviet threat in an historical context and to discuss the nature of our adversary, his resolve and commitment to the competition, his weapons, and the long-range prospects.

First, to the nature of the conflict. Some would have you believe that this competition is yet another episode of great power rivalry growing out of nationalisms rooted in the last century; that it derives from a search for security or to overcome a national sense of inferiority; or a quest for markets or spheres of influence, or a host of other traditional modern European State objectives. More recently, you will have heard that it is based in misunderstandings or failure at Yalta or the hobgoblin fantasies of military industrial complexes on both sides; that the rivalry is based on old fashioned thinking, an outdated cold war mentality, or an exaggerated suspicion of the other side's intentions.

My personal view is that these explanations do not go to the heart of the conflict: that it is, in fact, a conflict deeply

rooted in ideas and that the ideas and the conflict are as old as recorded history. The threat posed by the Soviet Union -- by Russia -- is the lineal descendant of the same threat Western civilizations have faced for three and a half thousand years: it is the threat posed by despotisms against the more or less steadily developing concept that the highest goal of the State is to protect and foster the creative capabilities and the liberties of the individual. The contest between the United States and the Soviet Union is, in my view, the latest chapter in the conflict that pitted the Athenians against Xerxes and the Persians; the Romans against Attila and the Huns; Medieval Europe against Genghis Khan and the Mongol horde; and the Holy Roman Empire against Suleiman and the Ottomans. It is the contest between two elemental and historically opposed ideas of the relationship between the individual and the State. The ideas are irreconcilable.

### Our Alien Adversary

The first point I want to make today is that the threat from Russia is grounded in ideas older than Marx and Lenin and Bolshevism, and derives from a culture and civilization fundamentally different from our own -- despite the best efforts of some observers to persuade us that the Russian leaders must think as we do and inwardly share the same spiritual values because they wear Saville Row suits, like jazz, American cigarettes and fast cars, and are personable and intelligent. Abraham Lincoln is said to have asked his Cabinet how many legs a dog would have if you called the tail a leg. They all answered five. Lincoln replied, "No, four. Calling a tail a leg don't make it so." Calling Russia Westernized or European don't make it so. It is vital to understand just how different Russia -- the Soviet Union -- is from us, to understand how different is their history, culture, and outlook. This is an approach unwelcome to some who see it in American ethnocentrism or narrow-minded prejudice of some sort. But listen to the observations of several noted Russian-born historians, especially Tibor Szamuely.\*

For centuries, "Most incomprehensible and alien of all, pervading and coloring every Western description of Russia, was the awesome sway of an omnipotent State exercising unlimited control over the persons, the property, and the very thoughts of its subjects" -- and the faithful servants of the monarchs of absolutist Europe were among those who felt this to be a phenomenon beyond the compass of their experience. There is a basic fact that today has been largely forgotten or passed in

\*Nearly all of the following points are quoted or paraphrased from Tibor Szamuely's *The Russian Tradition* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1974), who in turn cites other historians such as Paul Miliukov and V. Kliuchevsky.

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

## UNCLASSIFIED

## THE SOVIET THREAT (U)

Robert M. Gates

silence: "Every country of modern Europe either was at one time a province of the Roman Empire or received its religion from Rome. Russia is the sole exception. It is the only country of geographical Europe that owed virtually nothing to the common cultural and spiritual heritage of the West."

The absence of natural frontiers for Russia led to a history of armed struggle against invaders that for length, intensity, and ferocity has no parallel in the annals of any other nation. For centuries Russia was the frontier, "the great open defenseless dividing-line between the settled civilized communities of Europe and the nomadic barbarian invaders of the Asian steppes." This was Russia for a thousand years. The cruel relentless struggle never abated. It was a permanent part of her life for most of her history. The death of the great Khan Batu saved Europe from the Mongols: Russia lived under Mongol rule for 250 years.

This was a national experience and a national existence radically different from that of the West. It created a social and political system, a national character, a mentality, a way of life utterly dissimilar to the patterns evolved in Western and Central Europe. The Mongols gave to Russia a political and administrative system, a concept of society quite unlike anything learned in the West. The Mongol Empire was in fact "a State grounded on an ideology," not just a State among other States but a "World Empire in the Making," the object of which was the establishment, by means of war, of a system of universal peace and of a worldwide social order.

The three centuries that followed Russia's proclamation of full sovereignty after expelling the Mongols were for her people a period of unremitting and relentless armed struggle such as no other still existing nation has endured. It was "the fierce struggle of a nation placed on the frontier between Europe and Asia, on the great dividing line between settled and nomadic society, between Christian, Moslem, and Pagan, of a poor but hardy resourceful nation pushed out of its homeland into the inhospitable environment of northern forests and Arctic waste." . . . "the struggle of a nation that felt it had been assigned by Providence and by nature to the stupendous task of colonizing and settling a wilderness far greater in size than the whole continent of North America . . ." This combination of national purpose, moral fervor, self-defense, and everyday struggle for a bare existence was the driving force behind the Russian people's travail. The state of never ending war gave their society its distinctive form.

In Russia, military service was obligatory and permanent. In wartime, each and all were compelled to go to battle. "And wartime was all the time." To gain an idea of the colossal effort, compare it with medieval military practice in Europe. From the 1300s, Russia raised and maintained a permanent armed force of 65,000 men. At the battle of Crecy in 1346, the King of France commanded the largest army yet seen in feudal Europe -- 12,000, and the force of the First and greatest Crusade numbered 25 - 30,000. And these campaigns were "short-lived spurts of energy that left their begetters utterly exhausted." Yet Russia, with a much smaller population than France, maintained its huge army not just for an isolated campaign but for 300 unbroken years, while at the same time conducting an endless series of wars against more highly developed Western neighbors and also colonizing a continent. The result was the rise of a political system "based on the unquestioning obedience and unlimited submission of the subjects; on the principle of the obligations owed by each and every subject to the State, on the impressment into the State's service of all the creative forces of the nation, and on the sacrifice of private interest to the State's demands." The Tsar combined symbols of terrifying power with very real and extremely effective authority over the lives and welfare of

every one of his subjects, regardless of degree or rank. The position of the Tsar (of the State) was one of unique strength. He was the sole and exclusive wielder and the source of power. All authority in the country emanated from him. He shared power with no one.

The Russians' attitude toward their state was determined by their acute consciousness of the fact that only a powerful and rigidly centralized State in full control of the nation's every resource could ensure national survival. Another determinant was the centuries-old isolation from Europe and the resulting ignorance and fear of the outside world. But even these cannot account for the ecstatic rapture, the exultation bordering on idolatry with which Russians learned to regard their country and their State. "Russia was a state of mind, a secular ideal, a sacred idea and object of almost religious belief -- unfathomable by the mind, unmeasurable by the yardstick of rationality."

Messianic Communism in Russia grows out of a centuries-old identification of Russia with Orthodox Christianity, its cause with the cause of God, its State power with the power of God. The State and the faith became one. In 1510, this found expression in a monk's address to the Tsar: "All Christian Empires have converged into thy single one; two Romes have fallen, but the third stands and no fourth can ever be. Thy Empire shall fall to no one." This became the "Russian idea" -- dismissed over succeeding centuries by Western Statesmen and journalists as hypocritical mumbo jumbo. Yet, the conviction that Russia occupied a special place in the world permeated every segment of the Russian people -- the ultimate vindication of an otherwise unbearable social and political system. The idea lives on today.

Over the centuries, the Russian idea developed into an exotic amalgam of emotions that struck vibrantly upon the high-strung chords of the Russian soul: "deep national feeling, a sense of belonging to a nation set apart from others by its own history; . . . the conviction that the individuals' duty toward the State . . . transcended all other obligations. . . ; the idea that collectivism . . . was nobler than individualism; the assumption that idealism and other worldliness were inherent in the Russian national (spirit) in contrast to the gross materialism of the Western scheme of values; . . . consciousness, to the point of exaggeration, of the profound difference between Russia and the West; the Messianic fervor that imbued the 'Russian idea', the conviction that the Russian nation was a 'God-fearing people' entrusted with the mission of sharing with others the revelation of unity and of true freedom which had been vouchsafed to them alone, and of redeeming the world from the bonds of individualism and materialism."

Russia, as it emerged onto the European stage, had three main peculiarities: 1) the military structure of the State -- "great Russia-in-arms" fighting West and East for her very existence; (2) the compulsory, extra-legal nature of the internal administration and social structure; (3) and a supreme authority with unlimited sphere of action. It does sound familiar.

Even at the end of the 18th Century, "Western governments and public opinion began to assume that Russia was a State much the same as any other absolute monarchy, only considerably larger, rather more backward, and consequently mysterious. To a certain extent, this was due to ignorance of Russian conditions and to the remarkably thorough-going way in which Russian educated society had adapted itself to the forms of European life. Much more telling, however, was the unremitting conscious effort of the government itself to implant, both abroad and at home, the image of a well-ordered

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**UNCLASSIFIED****THE SOVIET THREAT (U)****Robert M. Gates**

society that had chosen its political system partly out of necessity and partly for its manifested advantages."

A final note on the nature of our adversary. Much has been made in recent months about technology transfer to the USSR. I would point out to you that industry and technology were transplanted from the West to Russia, beginning with Italian architecture in the 14th Century and carried forward by Peter the Great. Imagine, if you will, the sight of the great seven-foot tall Tsar touring and working as a laborer in Western Europe in the late 17th century to learn the ways of the West, to hire Western technicians and craftsmen and to acquire whole industries and technologies and factories — which he would bring back to Russia to begin to modernize that backward State. And, as Szamuely observes, this artificial creation was forced upon an unwilling nation by Peter to overcome its military weakness. The very act of modernizing Russia — of establishing and exploiting contacts with the West — from the beginning was to make Russia a great military power. Did Peter intend that Westernization accompany modernization? He once told a companion, "We shall need Europe for a few decades, and then we can turn our backside to her." Can the Soviets' still aggressive quest for Western technology surprise us, realizing that the development of industry in that land originated with a transplant, a foreign graft, artificially protected and fostered by the State from then until now?

It is this unique State which we now confront — a State and a culture shaped by a thousand years of constant war, sacrifice, and the conviction that Russia's destiny is to establish a new world order. And still we ask if they can sustain their defense effort.

**The Threat**

With this historical insight into the nature of our rival, let me turn to its military machine — the threat itself. The Soviet Union embarked on a long-term buildup of strategic forces which will continue throughout the decade; a comprehensive program intended to achieve military objectives against the United States and Eurasia and involving improvements to offensive and defensive forces and the means to control them. The estimated dollar costs, excluding RDT&E of Soviet strategic forces during the last decade were more than three times US outlays. In 1981 alone, estimated dollar costs of Soviet intercontinental attack forces exceeded US outlays by about 50 percent — even at a time when the US was investing in Trident, air launched cruise missiles, and B-52 enhancement programs.

**ICBMs**

The Soviet ICBM force currently consists of nearly 1,400 launchers. More than half are SS-17, SS-18, and SS-19 missiles, most of which are equipped with multiple, independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs). The Soviets have nearly completed a modernization program to deploy large numbers of the most accurate versions of these ICBM systems. As a result, the Soviets now possess the necessary combination of ICBM numbers, reliability, accuracy, and warhead yield to put most of the US Minuteman and Titan silos at risk from an attack with a relatively small proportion of their ICBM force. Each warhead on the MIRVed SS-18, for example, has a better than 50 percent chance of destroying a Minuteman silo. The single RV versions of the SS-18, with their large destructive power and accuracy, are capable of destroying, with high probability, current fixed targets. ICBMs not suitable for hardened installations can be targeted against strategic bomber airfields, conventional military bases, including ports for repair and basing of US SSBNs, and administrative and economic centers. In 1981, estimated Soviet dollar costs for ICBMs were 10 times as large as US outlays.

Soviet ICBM modernization will continue over the next 10 years. We already have identified four new ICBM programs. These programs feature further improvements in accuracy and increased survivability. One is a solid-fueled missile, believed to be medium-sized, which carries a MIRV payload and is probably intended as a replacement for the SS-11 and perhaps the SS-17. Another may serve as a mobile ICBM. While retaining existing types of liquid missiles, such as the SS-18, future solid-propellant ICBM development and deployment will give the Soviets additional flexibility in handling and in basing their missile forces.

The Soviets currently have deployed over 5,000 warheads on their ICBMs. They are in a position to add several thousand warheads to their ICBM force by the end of the decade.

**SLBMs**

The Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile submarine force currently consists of 62 modern SSBNs. These SSBNs — YANKEE, DELTA, and TYPHOON-class units — are armed with 950 missiles (SLBMs) with a total of almost 2,000 nuclear warheads. The estimated cumulative dollar costs between 1972-81 of Soviet SLBM programs was about 65 percent greater than corresponding outlays by the US.

The range capabilities of the Soviet SLBMs capable of strikes against the US vary from 3,000 kilometers for the SS-N-6, carried by YANKEE-class submarines, to 9,100 kilometers for the SS-N-8, carried by DELTA I and II-class units. The accuracies and yields of these missiles also vary, but none currently have the combination of accuracy and yield necessary to threaten hard targets such as US ICBM silos. Soviet SLBMs would, however, be effective against a range of targets, including US SSBNs in port and bomber bases. The portion of the bomber force held on alert for rapid take-off would escape the strike, assuming DOD planning factors are correct.

Over the next 10 years, the Soviets will deploy more SSBNs armed with long-range, more accurate missiles. Their force of submarines with long-range missiles is capable of striking targets in the United States while remaining in waters close to the Soviet Union where they can be protected by other naval and air forces.

The overall size of the force is likely to remain unchanged. But, as newer MIRV-capable SLBMs are deployed in greater numbers, the Soviet SSBN force will be able to cover additional targets. If the SS-NX-20 carried by the TYPHOON-class submarines were fitted with seven warheads — the number carried by the SS-N-18 — six TYPHOONS could cover more targets than all of the current operational YANKEES together. The accuracy of Soviet SLBMs will improve over the next 10 years and they might achieve a limited hard target capability by the early 1990s.

**IRBMs**

The Soviets currently have some 580 intermediate and medium range ballistic missiles carrying about 1,250 warheads deployed in bases throughout the USSR. They still have about 240 older SS-4 MRBMs and SS5 IRBMs. They also have deployed about 340 highly accurate SS-20 mobile IRBMs, each with three independently targetable warheads. All but about 100 of these are opposite NATO. The Soviets have instituted a moratorium against additional SS-20 deployments in the western USSR, but we expect the force to expand in the east.

**Bombers**

Even in this area the US has considered its preserve for many years, the Soviets are showing new interest. The Soviets

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THE SOVIET THREAT (U)  
Robert M. Gates

are developing a new intercontinental bomber that is similar in appearance to, but larger than, the US B-1. The new bomber will probably begin to enter service with the Soviet Air Forces during the mid-to-late 1980s. It is expected to have a supersonic capability and the ability to penetrate Western air defenses at low altitudes. The Soviets probably will configure the new bomber to carry free-fall bombs and long-range cruise missiles. This weapon flexibility would allow them to use some of the new bombers to penetrate air defenses and deliver bombs, while using others as standoff platforms for launching cruise missiles.

The Soviets currently have some 150 heavy bombers assigned to their strategic aviation forces. Almost half of these aircraft — some 70 TU-95 Bear — are equipped with air-to-surface missiles that can be used to attack both land and naval targets. These aircraft could be reequipped within the next several years to carry long-range cruise missiles. The additional cruise missile carriers could be used to complement the new bombers.

The Soviets continue to produce about 30 Backfire bombers per year and about half are assigned to the Soviet Air Force. The Backfire probably is intended for strikes against land and naval targets on the periphery of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact countries, but has the capability to perform missions against the US under certain circumstances. Moreover, the Soviets also may choose to equip it with long-range cruise missiles, which would increase significantly the area threatened by the Backfire.

Ballistic Missile Defense

The USSR is currently upgrading and expanding ballistic missile defenses at Moscow within the limits of the ABM Treaty. The Soviets will increase the number of ABM launchers at Moscow to the Treaty limit of 100 by the mid-1980s. Such a force could be easily overcome by a large US missile attack, but it would provide some protection against small attacks. Research, development, and test programs are improving their ability to expand ABM defenses, although there is no evidence at this time that they are planning to do so.

In the strategic defense area generally — ABM, SAMs, interceptors, and control and warning systems — the estimated cumulative dollar costs of Soviet spending were more than ten times as great as US outlays between 1972 and 1981 and for 1981 alone more than 20 times as great, reflecting differences in the two countries' strategic doctrine and differences in the bomber threat.

The great disparity between Soviet and US outlays year after year for a decade — and before that, Soviet expenditures in strategic weaponry in the late 1960s and early 1970s when US defense resources were focused on Vietnam — has led to substantial cumulative advantages for the USSR.

And do we see a slowing? In the first three years of this decade, we have already identified as many systems under development as in each of the previous two decades. Among these are fighter and airborne warning and control aircraft, ballistic and cruise missiles, space systems and submarines. We project that more systems will reach initial operational capability in the 1980s than in either the 1960s or 1970s. The new systems cover the full range of technologically advanced weaponry the Soviets will need to modernize all major elements of their forces.

Steady expansion of production floorspace — averaging 2-3 percent a year — has also occurred since the mid-seventies. This has provided the Soviets with the potential to translate the new systems into deployments in the field.

The Challenge in the Third World

In many respects, a description of Soviet intercontinental attack forces, and even the forces opposite NATO and China, tends to obscure what I regard as the more immediate threat posed by the Soviet Union now and for years to come: the challenge in the Third World. Even here the Soviets bring important advantages.

- The first is the ability to provide substantial quantities of weapons of varying degrees of sophistication with great speed and often attractive terms to countries in need of arms, either for internal control, national defense, or aggression. The steady flow of arms from the great depot at Nikolayev to Syria, Cuba, Iraq, and a host of other nations is testimony to attractiveness of Soviet weapons. What is so dismaying is the ready availability of huge stocks of weapons, which permit the Soviets to answer calls for military equipment almost immediately. And with the weapons come Soviet advisors, maintenance, and resupply.
- A second advantage is the Soviet program of active measures or covert action. All that need be said and can be said is that the program is vast, sophisticated, well-funded, and highly professional. It incorporates the full range of such activities, including agents of influence, political manipulation, propaganda, forgeries, and disinformation, exploitation of instability, and support of insurgencies.
- A third advantage is an aggressive program of training for both military and security forces in host countries and in the Soviet Union itself.
- A fourth advantage is the Soviets' opportunity to make use of surrogate or proxy governments which provide military forces. In Ethiopia and Angola, the Cubans help maintain the current governments in power and at the same time are able to ensure that forces hostile to the Soviet Union and Cuba do not threaten sympathetic governments. In Central America, Cuba has armed Nicaragua with older Soviet weapons and Nicaragua in turn has become an exporter of revolution and insurgency. Surrogates minimize the cost and risks for the Soviet Union of involvement in the Third World and at the same time lessen the chances of the kind of dramatic expulsion that the Soviets endured in 1972 in Egypt or the loss of a sympathetic figure as in Chile in the early 1970s.

In sum, I believe the most likely immediate threat from the Soviet Union during the next decade will be the Soviets' exploitation of economic, social, and political problems in the Third World to foster instability, and that the arsenal of tools they have at their disposal makes them a formidable adversary in this arena as well as in the strategic military competition. It is not accidental that their new more active role in the Third World began in the mid-1970s and coincided with our expulsion from Vietnam. That and subsequent events led the Soviets to conclude that the United States would not compete militarily in the Third World. As long as they perceive the risks of confrontation with this country to be small, they will not hesitate to exploit any opportunities that present themselves.

The Soviets also see an opportunity to exploit differences between this country and our allies and will use every means at their disposal to magnify those differences and to use them to divide the West. In the forefront of this has been their broad effort to derail the deployment of INF. While it is hard to

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## THE SOVIET THREAT (U)

Robert M. Gates

quantify the magnitude of that effort, I can tell you that there have been some estimates that their campaign to prevent deployment of the enhanced radiation weapon (neutron bomb) in the late 1970s involved a covert program costing perhaps as much as \$100 million.

A final word about the threat. I believe we will not see open Soviet aggression against an ally or China or Iran, for these are dramatic actions the Russians know would galvanize the West, and give new life to NATO and preparedness even in the most cost-conscious countries. No, the Soviet way has been far more clever than Hitler's open aggression. They strive to avoid armed conflict with important and militarily strong adversaries, as in 1939 and in 1962. They use military power cautiously and most often when they have overwhelming force. But they advance where there is a vacuum, where hostile forces are weak, or they insinuate themselves through clandestine means. They believe time is on their side; there is no need to hurry. The fruit will drop when it is ripe. And the circumstances will usually be sufficiently ambiguous that their role cannot be proven to a skeptical, disbelieving West.

**Vulnerabilities**

I have sketched out a mindset and an arsenal of weapons and other instruments of foreign policy that suggest that we face a formidable adversary indeed. But it is an adversary with weaknesses and vulnerabilities:

- The United States does not stand alone. The Soviet Union faces also a powerful NATO Alliance in the West, and China in the East. The military might of the United States and its allies is great and growing stronger. The economic might and technological prowess of the United States and its allies is overwhelming.
- The Soviet economy is in trouble. There are signs that the factories may have trouble producing all of the weapons and equipment that the Soviet military would like to obtain.
- The Soviet Union depends importantly on imports of grain, technology, and production techniques from the West.
- The Soviet Union cannot rely upon its allies: indeed, revolts over a generation in Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia raise questions of the reliability of their forces for the Warsaw Pact. The inability of the Soviet Union to absorb these states is, in itself, evidence of the fundamental cultural and historical contrast between Europe, of which they are a part, and Russia.
- The Soviet Union has little to offer developing nations either in terms of economic assistance or as a model of an effective economy.
- Russian advisors, military and civilian, tend to be detested in virtually every country in which they are hosted.

In sum, the Soviets are not ten feet tall and they do not march in seven league boots. They have problems and they

have vulnerabilities, both of which can be exploited. But they are also flexible, patient and determined. Lenin once said "Two steps forward, one step back." Despite its great vulnerabilities, Russia grew over the centuries in just this way -- probing outward, exploiting opportunities and the vulnerabilities of its enemies, enduring setbacks (some of them dramatic), but always reasserting the relentless pressure. This was the pattern of Russian expansionism for centuries, and so it still remains.

**Conclusions**

Will Durant once calculated that in the last 3,400 years of recorded history, only 268 have seen no war. The monumental conflicts in my story, as described at the beginning, were those between the emerging civilizations of the West with one concept of the relationship between an individual and the State, and the despotisms and barbarisms of the East with a fundamentally different view of that relationship. And when those Western civilizations grew tired or lost their will, or for whatever reason let down their guard, destruction followed. Edward Gibbon's words in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* still seem relevant today: "The Romans were ignorant of the extent of their danger and the number of their enemies. Beyond the Rhine and the Danube, the Northern countries of Europe and Asia were filled with innumerable tribes of hunters and shepherds, poor, voracious and turbulent; bold in arms and impatient to ravage the fruits of industry . . . The endless column of barbarians pressed on the Roman Empire with accumulated weight." A thousand years of Russian history -- and Marxism-Leninism as well -- whisper to the Soviet leadership that conflict is inevitable, that the contest for supremacy is unending, that one side will win and the other will lose, and that destiny or God or the forces of history will ensure Russia's victory.

President Kennedy some 20 years ago observed that we were involved in a long twilight struggle. We have now been in that struggle for just 35 years. Compare that, if you will, with the centuries of struggle between Rome and the barbarians, the two and a half century struggle between Europe and the Mongol horde, and the 200 year struggle against the Turks. It is a long struggle that stretches before us and the Russians are banking on the fact that we lack the will to sustain the competition.

As a final thought, therefore, I would suggest to you that the chief threat posed by the Soviet Union is not necessarily in the vastness of its military forces -- though vast they are, but, like the barbarians facing Rome, in the relentlessness of their assault. The "endless column of barbarians" is pressing on. The question of inestimable historical importance as we strive both to counter the Soviet threat and to diminish the dangers of nuclear conflict, is whether we will remember the origin and nature of the contest, and the lessons of history: that the whole historical experience of our adversary teaches him that conflict is constant and inevitable; and that eventual victory in the competition is Russia's destiny and the justification for its centuries of hardship and sacrifice. And so, despite our fondest hopes to fulfill Isaiah's prophesy, all of human history -- and especially all of Russian history -- points to our need and the need of our children and their children for swords as well as plowshares. It is not a forecast of an altogether felicitous future -- but it is a forecast of a free one.

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